

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of:

Grimm, David C.

Serial No.: Filed herewith

Filed: February 7, 2002

For: RESERVATION SYSTEM AND
METHODS FOR THEME PARKS

Parent Application:

Serial No. 60/267,126

Filed: February 7, 2001

Group Art Unit:

Examiner:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Before further examination on the merits, please amend the Application as follows;

IN THE CLAIMS


Please cancel claims 4-8, 11, 13-15, 17, 19-22, 24-25, 27, 32, 36-37, 45-46, 48, 52, 55-56, 58, 60-61, 63, 65-67, 73-74, 76-77, 79, 81, 84, 86-88, 97, 99, 103-104, 107, 111-112, 114-124, 126-130.

In view of the foregoing, a Notice of Allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 
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Clean Set of Claims

1. A reservation system for scheduling admission of guests into attractions comprising:

an input/output device;

a maintenance unit linked to said input/output device to store, receive, send, and process data wherein a portion of said processed data is the scheduling of a limited number of active reservations; and

a controller unit linked to the maintenance unit for directing access into the attraction.

2. The system of claim 1, where said input/output device comprises:

an interface system for guests to communicate with said input/output device;

an identifier device to enable said input/output device to identify valid ticket holders;

a money receiver to enable said input/output device to receive cash and credit card payments;

a processor to process and evaluate data submitted to said input/output device;

a transmission device to receive and send data to and from said input/output device;

a storage device to store data within said input/output device; and

a printer to print tickets or information from said input/output device.

3. The system of claim 2, where said interface system enables communication between the guest and said input/output device through an interface device

selected from the group consisting of a keyboard, a mouse, a touch screen monitor, or voice recognition system.

9. The system of claim 2, where said money receiver receives money and adds value to said guest card which can be used like a debit or credit card throughout the park.

10. The system of claim 1, where said maintenance unit comprises:

a storage device to store data within said maintenance unit;

a transmission device to receive and send data to and from other devices;

a processor within said maintenance unit capable of performing multiple functions and calculations; and

an input device to enable employees to manually input data into said maintenance unit.

12. The system of claim 10, where said processor is capable of verifying valid ticket holders, using algorithms to compute optimal reservation times and seating capacity, as well as controlling park functions.

16. The system of claim 1, where said controller unit comprises:

a storage device to store data within said controller unit;

a processor to run the functions of said controller unit;

a transmission device to receive and send data to and from said controller unit to other devices;

a queue system linked to the controller unit to control entry into the attraction;

an access terminal for manual entry of data into said controller unit; and

a display monitor linked to said controller unit to enable guests to view and access wait times for non-reservation queue and next available times for reservation queues, personal information, and park information.

18. The system of claim 16, where said processor of the controller unit is able to process the information received from the maintenance unit and able to direct the reservation queue and non-reservation queue.

23. The system of claim 16, where said controller is linked to a queue system consisting of a reservation queue and a non-reservation queue.

26. A method for scheduling admission of guests into attractions comprising the steps of:

making a reservation at an input/output device prior to the guest's arrival at an attraction;

relaying that request from said input/output device to a maintenance unit to be processed and calculated to optimize the guest's schedule;

relaying the proposed schedule from said maintenance unit back to the input/output device to be accepted or rejected by the guest;

relaying the acceptance or rejection from the input/output device to the maintenance unit in order to be updated by the data files of the system;

relaying the confirmed reservation from the maintenance unit to a controller unit

to enable valid reservation holders to gain access into a reservation queue; and

working in conjunction with a non-reservation queue to maximize attraction capacity by filling non-reserved seats with waiting guests.

28. The method in accordance with claim 27, where said input/output device uses an identifying device able to obtain information through an accessing device selected from the group consisting of a magnetic stripe, a bar code, or a microchip.
29. The method in accordance with claim 26, where said input/output device allows information and reservations to be accessed through an interface device selected from the group consisting of a touch screen monitor, keyboard, mouse, or voice interface.
30. The method in accordance with claim 26, where said input/output device provides information concerning general park information, specific attraction information including news, updates, attraction description, wait times, reservation times still available, or general park information.
31. The method in accordance with claim 26, where said input/output device enables guests to make a selection for an attraction by choosing attractions, available times, or preferred times for attractions.
33. The method in accordance with claim 30, where said selection may be limited by a predetermined parameter.
34. The method in accordance with claim 33, where said predetermined parameters are to limit the number of selections from a particular category of attractions categorized by geography or popularity.
35. The method in accordance with claim 33, where the number of said selections allotted to each guest is limited to a certain number of active reservations by the type of ticket a ticket holder is issued.

38. The method in accordance with claim 26, where said schedule is designed to optimize the time of the guest based upon the requested attractions enabling the guest to enjoy as many of the requested attractions as possible in the allotted time without any conflicts and with time in between attractions to enjoy other attractions, meals, shops, and shows.
39. The method in accordance with claim 26, where said maintenance unit evaluates the request using an algorithm.
40. The method in accordance with claim 39, where said algorithm is designed to enable the guest to attend as many of the requested attractions with the least amount of time difference from the requested times all within the time frame requested by the guest while adhering to certain predetermined parameters to ensure favorable and maximum usage of the park.
41. The method in accordance with claim 26, where a guest's schedule can be further optimized by being rescheduled so that current reservations can be changed to accommodate both previous and current requests without losing the previous reservations.
42. The method in accordance with claim 41, where current reservations can be rescheduled to fit new requests without losing previously confirmed reservations by moving the previously confirmed reservation to a new time and placing the new request into the previously confirmed time slot.
43. The method in accordance with claim 40, where said algorithm takes into account a number of variables including the time of year, current park attendance levels,

the day of the week, the time of the month, the weather, the length of time to complete the attraction, the time it takes to walk from attraction to attraction, the time it takes for meals, the seating capacity of said attraction, the guest's prior reservation schedule and available number of reservations, the ratio of reservation holders to non-reservation holders allowed for said attraction, forecasted attendance, and other restrictions favorable to the movement and management of guests in and around a theme park.

44. The method in accordance with claim 39, where said algorithm results are relayed back to said input/output device to be accepted or rejected by said guest.
47. The method in accordance with claim 45, where said schedule containing reservations are relayed to the appropriate controller unit.
49. The method in accordance with claim 26, where said attraction is accessed through two queues comprising:
- a reservation queue for guests who have reserved a position in advance; and
 - a non-reservation queue for guests wishing to arrive at said attraction and wait for the next available seating.
50. The method in accordance with claim 26, where said maintenance unit works in conjunction with said controller to manage access to each attraction so as to fill each attraction to full capacity.
51. The method in accordance with claim 50, where said maintenance unit directs said controller unit to fill unclaimed reservation seats with guests waiting in said non-reservation queue.

53. The method in accordance with claim 49, where said reservation queue is accessed by guests with a guest card.
54. The method in accordance with claim 53, where said guest card contains an accessing device selected from the group consisting of a magnetic stripe, bar code, or microchip.
57. The method in accordance with claim 49, where said reservation queue verifies valid reservation holders through the use of an identifying device.
59. The method in accordance with claim 49, where said reservation queue limits entrance into said reservation queue to valid reservation holders through the use of a barrier device.
62. The method in accordance with claim 49, where said non-reservation queue includes a counting device to count the number of guests entering said non-reservation queue.
64. The method in accordance with claim 62, where said non-reservation queue wait times are determined through the use of an algorithm.
68. A method for scheduling admission of guests into attractions comprising the steps of:
- making a reservation request prior to the guest's arrival at an attraction up to the previously set limit for a particular ticket holder;
 - relaying that request to a central processor to be processed and calculated to optimize the guest's schedule or reschedule the current schedule to include as

many of the requested attractions subject to any limiting predetermined parameters;

relaying the proposed schedule to the guest to be accepted or rejected;

relaying the acceptance or rejection back to the central processor in order to be updated into the system;

relaying the confirmed reservation to the appropriate attractions to enable valid reservation holders to gain access into the attraction at the appropriate time; and

working in conjunction with a non-reservation line to maximize attraction capacity by filling non-reserved seats with waiting guests.

69. A reservation system for scheduling admission of guests into attractions comprising:

an input/output device;

a maintenance unit linked to the input/output device to store, receive, send and process data wherein a portion of said processed data is processing a guest's schedule to accommodate both previous and current requests; and a controller unit linked to the maintenance unit for directing access into the attraction.

70. A reservation and pre-sale attraction package system for scheduling admission of guests into attractions comprising:

an input/output device;

a maintenance unit linked to said input/output device to store, receive, send, and process data wherein a portion of said processed data is the scheduling and sale of a limited number of active reservations; and
a controller unit linked to the maintenance unit for directing access into the park or specific attraction.

71. The system of claim 70, where the input/output device comprises:

an interface system for guests to communicate with said input/output device;
an identifier device to enable said input/output device to identify valid ticket holders;
a processor to process and evaluate data submitted to said input/output device;
a money receiver to enable said input/output device to receive cash and credit card payments;
a transmission device to receive and send data to and from said input/output device;
a ticketing device linked to said maintenance unit that dispenses a guest card;
a storage device to store data within said input/output device; and
a printer to print tickets or information from said input/output device.

72. The system of claim 71, where said interface system enables guests to communicate with said input/output device through an interface device selected from the group consisting of a touch screen monitor, keyboard, mouse, or voice interface system.

75. The system of claim 74, where said identifier device identifies guests by accessing a guest's data through the use of a guest card containing an accessing device selected from the group consisting of a magnetic stripe, a bar code, or a microchip.

78. The system of claim 70, where said maintenance unit comprises:

a storage device to store data within said maintenance unit;

a transmission device to receive and send data to and from other devices;

a processor within said maintenance unit capable of performing multiple functions, calculations; and processing data; and

an input device to enable employees to manually input data into said maintenance unit.

80. The system of claim 78, where said processor is capable of verifying valid reservation and ticket holders, using algorithms to compute optimal reservation times and seating capacity, as well as controlling park functions.

82. The system of claim 78, where said processor will manage the pre-sale attraction package, reservation, and admission process by directing the controller unit and input/output device to fully utilize each attraction.

83. The system of claim 70, where said controller unit comprises:

a storage device to store data within said controller unit;

a processor to run the functions of said controller unit;

a transmission device to receive and send data to and from said controller unit to other devices;

an access terminal for manual entry of data into said controller unit;

an accessible and viewable display monitor;

a queue system linked to said controller unit to control entry into the parking lot of the park, the park itself, and individual attractions and further comprises:

a parking lot queue for allowing guests who pre-purchased parking passes;

a park queue for allowing pre-sale attraction package holders to enter the park without any lines;

an attraction queue consisting of a reservation queue and a non-reservation queue.

85. The system of claim 83, where said processor of the controller unit is able to process the information received from the maintenance unit and able to direct the queue systems.

89. The system of claim 83, where said display monitor contains multiple screens which may be accessed by guests to obtain personal and park information through said interface device selected from the group consisting of a keyboard, mouse, voice interface, touch screen monitor, or scanner that reads guest cards.

90. The system of claim 83, where said attraction queue comprises:

a barrier device linked to said controller device which limits entry into said reservation queue to valid reservation and pre-sale attraction package holders;

an identifier device linked to said controller device which identifies valid reservation and pre-sale attraction package holders to said controller device; and

a second barrier device linked to said controller unit which limits entry into the attraction until the attraction is available.

91. The system of claim 83, where said non-reservation queue comprises:

a counting device linked to said controller unit which counts the number of guests waiting in the non-reservation queue; and

a barrier device linked to said controller unit which limits entry into the attraction until it is available.

92. The system of claim 83, where said parking lot queue comprises:

a blocking device linked to said controller unit which limits entry into the parking lot to guests with pre-purchased parking passes to pass; and

an identifier device linked to said controller unit that reads or scans valid parking pass holders.

93. The system of claim 83, where said park queue comprises:

a barrier device linked to said controller unit which limits entry into the park further comprising:

an identifier device linked to said controller unit that reads or scans for valid pre-sale attraction package holders.

94. A method for selling a pre-sale attraction package for entrance into a park comprising the steps of:

selling said pre-sale attraction package prior to the guest's entrance to said park;
relaying the purchase to a maintenance unit to be processed and updated into the
data files of the system;
relaying the confirmed ticket purchase from the maintenance unit to a controller
unit to enable valid pre-sale attraction package holders to gain access into the
parking lot, the park, or the individual attraction.

95. The method in accordance with claim 94, where said pre-sale attraction package
may be purchased over the telephone, on-line through a website, or said
input/output device prior to entering the park.
96. The method in accordance with claim 94, where said attraction package may be
purchased through an input/output device.
98. The method in accordance with claim 96, where said input/output device accepts
credit and cash payments and dispenses a guest card used to access the guest's
data.
100. The method in accordance with claim 95, where said website provides
information concerning general park information, specific attraction information
including news, updates, attraction description, wait times, various attraction
packages available for purchase, or other information concerning the park.
101. The method in accordance with claim 94, where said pre-sale attraction
packages consists of reservations for 5 to 15 attractions, meal reservations, a
parking pass, and an identification card that can be used like a credit card within
the park and be taken home like a souvenir.

102. The method in accordance with claim 94, where purchased pre-sale attraction package data is then relayed to said maintenance unit.
105. The method in accordance with claim 94, where purchased pre-sale attraction package data is relayed to the appropriate controller unit.
106. The method in accordance with claim 94, where purchasers of said pre-sale attraction packages purchased via the World Wide Web/Internet or through the phone are mailed a guest card enabling the guest to access the parks systems.
108. The method in accordance with claim 94, where said parking lot is accessed through a blocking device linked to said controller unit designed to identify valid pre-sale attraction package holders with advanced parking purchases.
109. The method in accordance with claim 94, where said park is accessed through a barrier device linked to said controller unit designed to identify valid pre-sale attraction package holders.
110. The method in accordance with claim 94, where said attraction is accessed through two queues linked to said controller unit comprising:
a reservation queue for guests who have reserved a position or purchased a position in advance; and
a non-reservation queue for guests wishing to arrive at said attraction and wait for the next available seating.
113. The method in accordance with claim 94, where said controller unit directs a system of two queues by limiting access to a reservation queue to valid

reservation holders and valid pre-sale attraction package purchasers and keeping track of the number of guests waiting in a non-reservation queue.

125. A method of operating a park, comprising the steps of:

selling a pre-sale attraction package containing all the attractions prior to the guest's entrance to a park;

relaying sale information reporting the sale to a maintenance unit associated with the park;

relaying the sale information from the maintenance unit to a controller unit;

permitting entry into the park by the guest having a valid pre-sale attraction package.